

THE BOURTONS PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Council meeting held in the Community Hall on Tuesday May 14th 2024 at 19:30

In attendance : Cllr Mrs S Upton (Chairman), Cllr A Johnson, Cllr Mrs G Duckworth, Cllr Mrs G Brooks, Cllr S Martin, DCllr P Chapman, Mrs R Pheasey (RFO), Stephen Bowen (Clerk) ; **Apologies** : Cllr Mrs J Beales (personal);

Declarations of Interest : none declared

Public Participation : 1 member of the public attending

Minutes : The previous Council meeting (April) minutes were reviewed and signed.

Minute Ref	Item	Delegated to
Note	The meeting was preceded by the Annual Parish Council meeting and the Annual Parish meeting	
2405-01	Footpaths Nothing to report	
2405-02	Highways & Road defects - Progress Report	
2405-02.029	Several reports received about obscured visibility on the Main Street, GB junction with the A423 Southam Road due to verges not being mown by OCC. This has been reported multiple times on FixMyStreet, awaiting action by OCC.	Information
2405-02.030	Community Speedwatch : the latest results from our volunteers were presented by Cllr Martin. The number of volunteers on the Speedwatch team has reduced and the team is keen to welcome interested residents to join. 60 vehicle vehicles were checked in the month with 5 excessive speeds being recorded & reported, max speed noted was 34mph. The programme seems to be having an impact, but speeding vehicles are still being seen when monitoring is not happening. 2 cars were found to have no tax.	Information
2405-09	Public Transport: Nothing to report	
2405-60	Planning applications:	
2405-60.031	New applications: we have received no new applications.	
2405-60.032	Decisions : 23/00418/F : 6 The Close, GB, existing porch to be demolished and replaced with 2 storey extension : PERMITTED	Information
2405-60.033	Enforcement matters : no new enforcement decisions have been published.	
2405-90	County & District Councillors report:	
2405-90.034	Following the local elections significant changes in representation have been felt at CDC, with the District Council currently without leadership pending the outcome of negotiations between the parties, which currently show no signs of reaching a conclusion. Cllr Barry Wood, former Conservative leader has stated that he will not be leading a coalition Council. One of our local District Cllrs, George Reynolds lost his seat. Council RESOLVED to write to him expressing our thanks for his leadership, guidance and support over the many years he has served on CDC: he remains a County Cllr.	Information
2405-04	Defibrillators:	
2405-04.035	Both units reported operating well.	Information
2405-05	Website:	
2405-05.036	A significant amount of new information re the Village Hall has been received, including many photos, and work is proceeding to upload this.	Information
2405-06	Projects update:	
2405-06.037	LB improvement : we are still having difficulty in getting into contact with OCC re the replacement of the village sign on Chapel Lane.	Information
2405-07	Playgrounds & Public Spaces:	
2405-07.038	GB Garners Field LAP : work on the finalisation of the transfer from CDC continues within their legal dept, but at a steady pace, no conclusion is anticipated before mid year.	Information
2405-07.039	GB Playground : The annual rent invoice has been received from the landowner. Despite previous letters, Council is concerned that no guidance has been received regarding the possible renewal of the lease which expires in 2026. Council is aware that much of the equipment in the playground is nearing its end of life, but will not invest in new equipment here until the future of the site is confirmed. If renewal is not an option then a search will be started to find another location, but we recognise this will be challenging near the centre of the village.	Information
2405-07.040	Verge mowing : a number of residents have expressed their views about mowing verges in the villages and the potential damage to wildlife etc. Council is reviewing this issue and will develop a Policy regarding verge maintenance, in locations where the PC is responsible. It should be noted that OCC has reduced its verge mowing to one cut per year in August.	Information
2405-08	Allotments:	
2405-08.041	Rent increase invoices have been issued reference the previously announced rise, 8 payments have been received at this time and Tenants who have NOT yet paid are requested to do so immediately please. With the lack of support for a Tenants Committee, the PC will continue to manage issues at the site directly. With some maintenance work now required [e.g. some fence posts] it is inevitable the rents will continue to rise. As costs rise due to inflation, Council believe that a small annual increase is the fairest way forward to avoid unexpected larger rises occasionally. It has therefore agreed that an annual rise of 5% or the rate of inflation, whichever is higher, be applied every October when rents are due.	Information
2405-08.042	Council also discussed the question of future rent increases and it was RESOLVED that this would be reviewed bi-annually with an increase in line with inflation or other impacts to ensure that the Allotments continue to cover all of their operating costs. It was recognised that work does need doing regarding replacement of certain fence posts and this will be reviewed.	Information
2405-10	Halls:	
2405-10.043	Council was disappointed to hear that neither the VHMC nor the CHMC was interested in displaying the official portrait of the King, which was provided free by central Government. Following discussions, agreement has been reached for it to be hung in the meeting room at the CH, where Council holds its meetings.	Information

2405-10.044	VH : As agreed previously 3 ridge tiles and 45 roof tiles have been replaced. New window cills have been ordered for the front windows & these are awaited. Various solutions to the internal damp at the rear of the hall are still being evaluated and work is expected to start shortly to resolve these.	Chairman Cllr Martin
2405-10.045	CH : The risks identified by the recent fire risk assessment are being costed and a plan of work will be AGREED. This will initially focus on the partially exposed oil feeder pipe. The CHMC is being kept informed.	Information
2405-11	Healthcare: Nothing to report	
2405-50	Finance & Administration:	
2405-50.046	The FIN REP prepared by the RFO was circulated and it was RESOLVED that the associated bank reconciliation be accepted and that 5 payments totalling £2,065.82 be approved. To comply with the requirements of the Transparency Code those in excess of £100 are listed below : SW Services : Grass cutting : £704.00 KC Graphics : web hosting : £468.00 J A Electrics : Smoke alarms in VH : £172.94 IG & M Cobb : GB playground annual rent : £250.00	Information
2405-50.047	The RFO confirmed that our new arrangements with Unity Trust Bank are now operational. The precise operational process for the authorisation and electronic signing of agreed payments will be evolved over the next 2 months and then the Ops Manual will be updated. Barclays have confirmed that the former current account has been closed and the funds transferred. Consideration will also be given to opening a bond with CCLA for our longer term reserves as this pays significantly more interest.	Information
2405-50.048	The Financial Regulations template has been updated by NALC to reflect the significant movement of Parish Council banking arrangements to electronic banking. This is timely, in the light of our move, and the new regulations were reviewed at the Annual Parish Council meeting. Full Council has therefore RESOLVED to adopt these with immediate effect.	Information
2405-50.049	The Standing Orders were also reviewed at the Annual Parish Council meeting, and following the Clerk's advice that there was no need for amendment, Council RESOLVED to adopt these for the current year.	Information
2405-50.050	Work continues to make applications to potential grant providers re the further work required on the Parish Clock. Council discussed seeking some external help with this task.	Chairman
2405-50.051	The RFO reported that the Annual accounts have been finalised and these will be circulated. This has enabled to Accounting Statements to be completed on the AGAR external audit document.	Information
2405-50.052	The Governance section of the AGAR has also been completed and the entire document, together with the bank reconciliation can now be sent to our internal auditor so she can complete the audit certificate. This is following a successful Zoom internal audit meeting with no concerns raised by the auditor. The Clerk confirmed that this was the first time in his 8 years as Clerk that both the annual accounts and AGAR had been completed in May. Council offered its sincere thanks to the RFO for her sterling work.	Information
2405-50.053	Following all of the above, and circulation of the Annual Accounts and AGAR documents, Council RESOLVED that the Chairman be authorised to sign the documents once the Internal Audit certificate has been received. These will then be submitted to Moore, the external auditors before the deadline of June 30th.	Chairman
2405-70	Correspondence:	
2405-70.054	A circular has been received from OALC regarding the Civility & Respect Charter requesting that all Councils seriously consider signing up to this. This has been circulated and Cllrs will consider and confirm their thoughts so Council can decide its stance at the June meeting.	Information
2405-80	New business: No new business was discussed Meeting closed at 21.00 Minutes drafted on 15/05/24 by the Clerk The next meeting will be held on Tuesday June 11th 2024 at 19:30 in the Community Hall meeting room.	